

Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-06

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R 250900Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6721

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBA

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGUI 0343

E.O. 11652: GDS

TALS: PFOR, CT, SF

SUBJECT: SAG FONMIN, TRANSKEI JUSTICE MINISTER VISIT CAR

REF: A. BANGUI 0112 - JANUARY 21 B. BANGUI 1539 - OCTOBER 23

1. HIGHLIGHT OF ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH CAR PRESIDENT BOKASSA'S 55TH BIRTHDAY ON FEBRUARY 22 WAS HIS INTRODUCTION DURING SAFARI HOTEL RECEPTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN MINISTER HILGARD MUELLER AND THE TRANSKEI JUSTICE MINISTER. ALSO PRESENT WERE MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT, DIPLOMATIC CORPS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF CHAD AND SPECIAL YUGOSLAVIA, GERMAN AND FED DELEGATION. MUELLER VISIT FORESEEN IN BANGUI 0112 WAS DELAYED BY ONE WEEK, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE OF ABORTIVE COUP ON FEBRUARY 3 AND THE AFTER-MATH AND DESIRE TO HAVE SOUTH AFRICANS PRESENT FOR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION. BOKASSA GREETED BOTH MUELLER AND TRANSKEI REPRESENTATIVE EFFUSIVELY WITH PUBLIC EMBRACES AND RPEATED REFERENCE TO PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP HE HAD HAD WITH BOTH LEADERS. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED TRANSKEI INDEPE DENCE IN OCTOBER AND

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IMPLIED HE WOULD RECOGNIZE AT APPROPRIATE TIME. BOKASSA ALSO

PAID PUBLIC TRIBUTE TO SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE,
NOTABLY 500-ROOM HOTEL PROJECT.

2. ALTHOUGH BOKASSA DID NOT SAY SO, PURPOSE OF MUELLER VISIT
MAY HAVE BEEN AS STATED REFTEL (A) TO PREPARE LONG-AWAITED
OFFICIAL VISIT TO CAR OF PRIME MINISTER VORSTER. INVITATION
GOES BACK TO AUGUST 23 WHEN BOKASSA PRESENTED TO CAR PUBLIC
SPECIAL SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE MISSION HEADED BY
DENIS ORCHARD OF JOHANNESBURG. VISIT MAY ALSO BE PRELIMINARY
TO GOCAR FOREIGN MINISTER VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA.

COMMENT: SMALL BIT OF HISTORY SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MADE ON
FEBRUARY 22. MUELLER'S PUBLIC PRESENTATION BEFORE LARGELY
AFRICAN AUDIENCE MAY HAVE BEEN FIRST OF ITS KIND IN FRANCOPHONE
AFRICA. IT IS ALMOST CERTAINLY ONE OF THE FIRST OCCASIONS IN
WHICH A TRANSKEI MINISTER HAS BEEN SO WELCOMED. WHILE THE FUTURE
IS SELDOM CLEAR WHEN IT CONCERNS CAR'S POSITION ON SOUTHERN
AFRICAN PROBLEMS, BOKASSA APPARENTLY STILL EXPECTS TO BE IN
FOREFRONT OF BLACK AFRICAN RELATIONSHIP WITH SAG AND NOW, IT
APPEARS, WITH TRANSKEI AS WELL.
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